

PROPOSED CLERICAL CAREER SERVICE

The SP Junior Advisory Panel has studied the feasibility of creating a Clerical Career Service with the result that although there are definite advantages to adopting the concept, it is probably bureaucratically impractical to administer. On the other hand members are unanimous in their belief that action must be taken now to provide more equitable and consistent treatment of the Agency's clerical employees. We think that proper management of clericals, as well as all other non-professionals, can be accomplished without resorting to a new career service. Implementation of the following personnel policy changes by all Agency Directorates would achieve this goal:

(1) Classify all non-professional jobs (the secretarial pattern concept would be eliminated) -- It is evident that the improper matching of skills and job requirements has created a morale problem in that individual skills are not being utilized. The current system bases a secretaries grade on the grade of her supervisor ^{and} ~~in turn~~ presumes all clerical jobs are the same (which they obviously are not). The fact that there are over clerical jobs is an invalid justification not to classify them properly. We do not suggest that all clerical

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jobs be classified on a priority basis -- rather than PMCD review clerical jobs as part of their regularly scheduled surveys.

(2) Require employees to meet job standards before they are promoted. Current practice is to allow employees to be promoted even though they may not have the skills required in the job i.e., clerk typist/secretary steno and intelligence assistant/intelligence analyst. This procedure creates inequities for those employees who have the required skills but do not occupy a position in which they can be promoted. It is also a wasteful government expense to pay an employee for a skill he doesn't possess. The Agency is inconsistent in that it does make a distinction at time of E.O.D. by paying higher rates to those with additional skills, i.e. clerks/typists/stenos, however, little concern is given to proper placement or equitable promotion after initial entrance on duty.

(3) Establish a minimum time in grade requirement for promotion. Since the initial assignment of clericals to any one of the four Directorates is pretty much by chance it seems inequitable that a Clerk, for example, in the DD/P has to wait one year to be promoted while one in the DD/S has to only wait six months. It is often rationalized that each Directorate has its own unique requirements, however, this is not a valid argument in the interests of consistency and equal treatment for ^{CLERICAL} ~~all~~ employees. ~~If offices do not agree to a minimum time~~

in grade we suggest they make their promotion policies known prior to assignment of clericals so at least an employee will know the situation.

(4) Use a vacancy notice for all clerical jobs GS-07 and above. Currently clerical vacancies are filled from within or by "word of mouth". The system is very paternalistic and it is very doubtful the best candidate is always chosen. Initiation and maintenance of a vacancy notice system by CSB will give all employees a chance to be considered.

(5) At least quarterly, issue a Headquarters Notice advising employees that the Clerical Staffing Branch is available to assist employees at all grade levels in obtaining reassignment. Since the Clerical Staffing Branch EOD's all clerical employees and has each Office's staffing requirements it should be the focal point for clerical reassignments. To aid CSB in the increased workload we recommend movement of DD/P's Clerical Assignment Branch to CSB. *Shift employees to Division* Moving control of Clerical reassignment outside of the Directorates and under Personnel's control would facilitate inter-directorate reassignment and remove fear of recrimination which employees often are concerned with when they ask for reassignment. Strengthening the role of CSB is a key point in eliminating the need for a Clerical Career Service without which the management of clerical employees would not be a success. In addition, we recommend that a Counseling Section be created as part of CSB to deal with the problems of non-professional employees.

(6) Establish and publish a procedure whereby clericals can be considered for progression from clerical to professional level positions within each of the Directorates. In May, 1970, DD/P issued a notice on the specific steps required for clerical employees to obtain professional status. We recommend a similar practice be followed by all Directorates and notices explaining the procedure be issued on a regular basis. Admittedly, the job requirements of several Office's do not lend themselves to conversion; however, many Offices do take employees on a continuing basis but this fact is unknown to the majority of Agency ^{clerical} employees. / ^{Example} Moreover, many employees classified as "clericals" have gone on to obtain Bachelor and/or Master Degrees but still find it difficult to break out of the "clerical" category while the Agency continues to hire new employees from the outside. Often times the skills we are seeking are already within the Agency. A published procedure of how to move to the professional ranks together with the use of the vacancy notice should answer the often heard criticism of clerical jobs being "dead-ended".